

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 DHA-02 IO-13 EB-07 TRSE-00
OMB-01 /085 W
-----171249Z 037920 /43

P R 162000Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1652
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP, BR (TODMAN, TERRANCE A)
SUBJECT: TODMAN COMMENTS IN VENEZUELA ABOUT BRAZIL

SUMMARY: BRAZILIAN PRESS MAY 11 REPORTED INACCURATELY,
COMMENT ATTRIBUTED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN IN
CARACAS TO EFFECT THAT US NO LONGER LOOKED TO BRAZIL
AS THE LEADING COUNTRY OF LATIN AMERICA. IN RESPONSE,
ITAMARATY MAY 12 ISSUED BRIEF BUT IRONIC REPLY CLAIMING THAT
US AS LEADING NATION IN WEST PERHAPS FOUND IT EASY TO
DETERMINE THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES. PRESS WAS NEARLY
UNANIMOUS IN CLAIMING ALLEGED TODMAN COMMENTS CAUSED UNEASINESS
IN BRAZIL AND WOULD NOT HELP RELATIONS. EMBASSY'S RELEASE OF
ACTUAL EXCHANGE IN CARACAS WAS REPORTED BY PRESS MAY 13.
RELEASE SAID ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAD INDICATED HE WAS NOT
INCLINED TO ACCEPT THAT IT WAS THE VIEW OF THE
NIXON-FORD ADMINISTRATION THAT BRAZIL DETERMINED
THE WAY FOR LATIN AMERICA, AND INCLUDED HIS STATEMENT
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THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD PURSUE ITS OWN
POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA. O ESTADO MAY 13 NOTED IN-
HOUSE CRITICISM FROM ITAMARATY SOURCES THAT FOREIGN
MINISTRY HAD NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CAREFUL IN CHECKING
ON AUTHENTICITY OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S ALLEGED
CARACAS COMMENTS. ITAMARATY PRESS OFFICER TOLD EMBOFF
MINISTRY HAD CHECKED AND STILL BELIEVED STATEMENT TO BE

APPROPRIATE. END SUMMARY.

1. ON THE EVE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE TODMAN'S VISIT TO BRAZIL, SEVERAL BRAZILIAN NEWSPAPERS MAY 11 REPORTED HIS COMMENTS IN RESPONSE TO PRESS UPON ARRIVAL IN CARACAS ABOUT US POLICY TOWARDS BRAZIL. IN FRONT-PAGE STORIES JORNAL DE BRASILIA AND FOLHA DE SAO PAULO ALLEGED ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAD SAID THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION "IS NOT DISPOSED TO ACCEPT THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF PRESIDENTS NIXON AND FORD, ACCORDING TO WHICH BRAZIL IS THE LEADING COUNTRY OF LATIN AMERICA, POINTING THE WAY TO BE FOLLOWED BY OTHER NATIONS OF THE HEMISPHERE."

2. O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO ALSO CARRIED ARTICLE IN ITS BACK PAGES, WHILE JORNAL DO BRASIL IGNORED QUOTE ABOVE AND EMPHASIZED TODMAN'S STATEMENT IN VENEZUELA ABOUT US MODIFICATION OF THE GSP.

3. IN RESPONSE ITAMARATY ISSUED A BRIEF NOTE TO THE PRESS, REPORTED MAY 12, WHICH SAID "EACH COUNTRY HAS ITS RELATIVE WEIGHT IN THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS. BRAZIL HAS ITS OWN. THE UNITED STATES IS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE LEADING NATION NOT ONLY IN THE AMERICAS, BUT ALSO THE WEST. PERHAPS BECUASE OF THIS, IT IS EASIER FOR THE US TO DISCERN THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES." CORREIO BRAZILIENSE MAY 12 COMMENTED THAT THE LAST TWO LINES OF THE NOTE CARRIED A CERTAIN IRONY IN ATTRIBUTING TO THE US A ROLE AS EVALUATOR OF THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONS.

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4. COMMENTARY IN JORNAL DO BRASIL MAY 12 CLAIMED ITAMARATY STATEMENT DEMONSTRATED UNCERTAINTY WITH WHICH ITAMARATY AWAITED ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN, AND PRINCIPALLY THE FEAR ABOUT WHAT HIS INTENTIONS ARE AT A TIME WHEN US/GOB ARE EMERGING FROM THE MOST SERIOUS POLITICAL CRISIS THEY HAVE HAD FOR YEARS. JORNAL CLAIMED ITAMARATY WAS SURPRISED BY TODMAN COMMENTS IN CARACAS PAPER SAID ITAMARATY HAD THOUGHT IT HAD DETECTED "A RETREAT" BY US FROM "PREVIOUS RADICAL POSITIONS" TO A MORE "TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAZIL IN THE LATIN AMERICA CONTEXT." JORNAL ALSO SAW SIGNIFICANCE IN FACT COMMENTS WERE MADE IN VENEZUELA WHICH ASPIRES TO EGIONAL LEADERSHIP, AND WHICH HAS TAKEN POSITIONS CONTRARY TO BRAZIL AND IS LOOKING FOR ALLIANCES WITH COUNTRIES TO COUNTER BRAZILIAN POWER. JORNAL NOTED THAT VIDELA IN FACT, INITIATED HIS VISIT TO VENEZUELA ONLY YESTERDAY. JORNAL ADDED THAT TODMAN STATEMENT ISOLATED BRAZIL ON THE CONTINENT, LEFT BRAZILIANS PERPLEXED AND PEREZ THE BENEFICIARY OF RE-MARKS. JORNAL CONCLUDED THAT STATEMENT "LIQUIDATED" BRAZILIAN

INTENTIONS OF TRYING TO MAINTAIN THE VALIDITY OF THE MOU.
IT IS NOT SURPRISING, PAPER SAID, BECAUSE CARTER TOLD OAS
ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES WOULD BE TREATED EQUALLY.
TODMAN NOW HAS MADE QUESTION DEFINITELY CLEAR.

5. FOLHA DE SAO PAULO MAY 12 CLAIMED ITAMARATY SPOKESMAN SAID
ABOUT TODMAN'S COMMENTS "WITHOUT DOUBT HIS OPINIONS WERE
INFELICITOUS AND WITHOUT PARALLEL AND WILL PROVOKE A CERTAIN
UNEASINESS." SPOKESMAN SAID IN REALITY BRAZIL DID NOT
ASPIRE TO ASSUME HEMISPHERIC LEADERSHIP AND IF THE DAY CAME
AND THE ROLE WAS ATTRIBUTED TO IT, IT WOULD BE BECAUSE OF
RECOGNITION BY THIRD PARTIES.

6. ACCORDING TO MAY 12 ESTADO EDITORIAL, IT IS ILLUSORY TO
EXPECT IN ANY POSITIVE SENSE RAPPROACHEMENT BETWEEN BRAZIL
AND US AFTER TODMAN STATEMENT IN VENEZEULA. PAPER SIAD HE
WILL ARRIVE WITH US POSITION WELL DEFINED THAT
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CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT PURSUE POLICIES
OF PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS TOWARDS BRAZIL. ESTADO

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NOTED THAT KISSINGER'S POLICY WAS GRATIFYING ON ONE HAND, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND IT STIRRED OLD FEARS FROM NEIGHBORS. PAPER CLAIMED ONLY GREAT EFFORT BY BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES CAN NOW HOLD BACK THE DETERIORATION OF USG/GOB RELATIONS. BUT ESTADO EXPRESSED HOPE US WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAZIL IN THE GAME OF WORLD POWER.

7. MAY 13 PRESS REPORTED EMBASSY'S RELEASE CLARIFYING ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT IN CARACAS. PAPERS REPORTED EXCHANGE ACCURATELY WITH JOURNALIST ASKING, "I SUPPOSE THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT FOLLOW THE THEME OF NIXON AND KISSINGER IN THE SENSE THAT BRAZIL HAD DETERMINED THE WAY FOR LATIN AMERICA. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS?" ASSISTANT SECRETARY REPLIED, "I AM NOT INCLINED TO ACCEPT THAT IT WAS THE THESIS OF NIXON AND FORD THAT BRAZIL DETERMINED THE WAY FOR LATIN AMERICA. OF COURSE I CAN SAY THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL PURSUE ITS OWN WAY IN RESPECT TO ALL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THOSE THINGS."

8. CORREIO BRAZILIENSE NOTED THAT EMBASSY TEXT DID NOT IDENTIFY JOURNALIST ASKING QUESTION, BUT THAT TEXT WAS EXTRACTED FROM TAPE RECORDING OF PRESS CONFERENCE. JORNAL DE BRASILIA WHICH DID NOT CARRY EMBASSY RELEASE REPORTED ITAMARATY DID NOT HIDE ITS INTENTION TO GIVE A "COLD TREATMENT" TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY. FOLHA DE SAO PAULO COMMENTARY SAID THAT ACCORDING TO ITAMARATY SOURCES, TODMAN HAD WANTED TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT BUT THAT MEETING WAS NOT POSSIBLE. THE GOB DECIDED TO GIVE THE VISIT "UNIQUELY CORRECT TREATMENT."

9. ACCORDING TO PRESS, ALL THIS REFLECTED RESENTMENT WITH THE CARTER POLICY AND WAS COMPOUNDED BY TODMAN'S COMMENTS IN CARACAS. MEMBER OF SILVEIRA'S CABINET TOLD FOLHA THAT ILL WILL DID NOT ENTER INTO QUESTION OF WHOM TODMAN WOULD SEE. PROBLEM WAS PROTOCOLARY AND GOB RESPONSE WAS SIMILAR TO WHAT "DEVELOPED WESTERN EUROPE" DID FOR VISITORS. FOLHA NOTED HOWEVER THAT TODMAN HAD MET WITH THREE CHIEFS OF STATE IN A WEEK BUT WOULD BE LIMITED IN HIS DISCUSSIONS HERE TO CONTACTS WITH CABINET-LEVEL OFFICIALS.

10. MAY 13 EDITORIAL ENTITLED "MUTUAL RESPECT" IN JORNAL DO BRASIL SAID TODMAN'S CARACAS STATEMENT DID NOT REPRESENT A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO RE-ESTABLISHING A GOOD CLIMATE FOR US-GOB RELATIONS. PAPER

NOTED PAST DIFFERENCES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED AND
SAID BRAZIL SHOULD CONTINUE ITS DIALOG WITH US IN
UNEMOTIONAL TERMS LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, NOT THE
PAST.

11. O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO COMMENTARY NOTED ITAMARATY
RESPONSE TO CORRECTED VERSION OF TODMAN'S CARACAS
STATEMENT WAS THAT "THE NEW VERSION DOES NOT INVALIDATE
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THE TERMS" OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S REPLY. PAPER
ADDED THAT SOME BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATS WHO ASKED NOT TO
BE IDENTIFIED SAID THAT ITAMARATY ACTED WITHOUT
TAKING THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS OF VALIDATING THE

EXACT VERSION OF WHAT TODMAN SAID BEFORE ISSUING A
REPLY. DIPLOMATS NOTED THAT ITAMARATY HAD 24 HOURS
TO CONFIRM TODMAN'S STATEMENT, BUT DID NOT TAKE THIS
OPTION OR WERE POORLY ADVISED BY GOB'S AMBASSADOR IN
VENEZUELA. SOME ITAMARATY DIPLOMATS PRAISED EMBASSY'S PROFESS-
IONAL RESPONSE IN ISSUING TEXT IN ORIGINAL SPANISH AS WELL
AS IN PORTUGUESE, AS TAKEN FROM TAPE IN CARACAS.

12. AT MAY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE ASST. SECRETARY SOUGHT
TO DEFINITELY CLARIFY MISINTERPRETATIONS IN CARACAS. TODMAN
REITERATED THAT HE DID NOT THINK IT HAD BEEN THE POLICY
OF THE NIXON AND FORD GOVERNMENTS TO RECOGNIZE BRAZIL AS
THE COUNTRY WHICH DETERMINED THE WAY FOR LATIN AMERICA,
AND THAT THE CARTER GOVERNMENT WOULD BE DETERMINING ITS
OWN POLICIES ANYWAY. HE ADDED SIGNIFICANTLY, THAT THE US
DID NOT HAVE ANY AUTHORITY TO CHOOSE A COUNTRY TO BE THE
LEADER OF A REGION. ADDITIONALLY, HE SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD
ANYTHING THAT INDICATED BRAZIL WISHED TO BE THE
LEADER WHO DETERMINED THE WAY FOR LATIN AMERICA. IT WOULD
NOT BE IN THE INTERESTS OF ANYONE FOR USG TO COME TO
BRAZIL TO RESOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS WHICH AROSE WITH OTHER
COUNTRIES. THIS WOULD NOT BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE USG
POSITION OF RESPECTING THE INDIVIDUALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY
OF EACH STATE. ASST. SECRETARY CONCLUDED BY RECOGNIZING
THE IMPORTANT ROLE BRAZIL PLAYED ON THE CONTINENT AND IN THE
WORLD AND SAID "IT IS VERY USEFUL FOR US TO MAINTAIN CON-
SULTATIONS WITH BRAZIL IN VARIOUS AREAS."

13. IN MAY 13 DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF,
ITAMARATY PRESS OFFICER REFUTED ESTADO CRITICISM (PARA 11
BOVE) BY NOTING ITAMARATY HAD RELEASED ITS STATEMENT
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48 HOURS AFTER TODMAN'S CARACAS STATEMENT. HE SAID ITAMARATY HAD CHECKED AUTHENTICITY OF STATEMENT AND IMPLIED THIS WAS WITH EMBASSY IN VENEZUELA. PRESS OFFICER ALSO REFUTED EMBOFF'S CLAIM THAT ITAMARATY RESPONSE SEEMED UNNECESSARY IN LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT CLARIFICATIONS. HE ALSO IMPLIED THAT STATEMENT WAS STIMULATED AS MUCH BY SOURED VENEZUELAN-BRAZILIAN RELATIONSHIP AS IT WAS BY TODMAN'S ALLEGED CHARACTERIZATION OF US POLICY TOWARD BRAZIL. NEVERTHELESS, HE BELIEVED ITAMARATY RESPONSE TO HAVE BEEN PROPER ONE. ESTADO, HOWEVER, CONTINUED ITS CRITICISM IN MAY 15 COMMENTARY WHICH TOOK ITAMARATY TO TASK FOR ITS BUSH LEAGUE RESPONSE TO TODMAN'S ALLEGED CARACAS COMMENT. BRAZIL WAS TOO BIG FOR THAT KIND OF PICAYUNE RESPONSE, PAPER ASSERTED.
CRIMMINS

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
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Errors: N/A
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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